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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1773  
INFO RUMJNG/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 4936  
RUEHCR/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 2419  
RUMJSA/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 3095  
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 7694  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 8528  
ZEN/AMCONSUL SHENYANG POUCH  
BT  
C O N F I D E N T I A L

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BEIJING 13067

E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: CH  
SUBJECT: DENG ANNOUNCES DEMOBILIZATION OF A MILLION  
SOLDIERS

REF: USDAO BEIJING IR 6814013785

1. AT AN ENLARGED MEETING OF THE CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION ON JUNE 4, DENG XIAOPING ANNOUNCED THAT THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) WOULD DEMOBILIZE ONE MILLION MEN, OR ONE QUARTER OF ITS TOTAL FORCE, IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS, I.E., BY THE END OF JUNE 1987. THE JUNE 10 EVENING TELEVISION NEWS GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO DENG'S SPEECH, SHOWING HIM IN GOOD FORM AS HE VIGOROUSLY AND ANIMATEDLY MADE HIS POINTS. THE FOLLOWING DAY NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS FRONTPAGE HIS REMARKS WITH A PHOTO SHOWING HIM IN AN ENERGETIC AND DETERMINED POSE.

2. DENG GAVE THE FOLLOWING JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE REDUCTION IN MILITARY MANPOWER:

--- THE PROSPECTS FOR WORLD PEACE ARE GOOD. "IT IS POSSIBLE THAT LARGE-SCALE WORLD WAR WILL NOT RECUR FOR A RELATIVELY LONG TIME."

--- ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION IS IN THE OVERALL INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY, AND EVERYTHING MUST BE SUBORDINATED TO IT. THE NEWSPAPER REPORT NOTED THAT SENIOR CADRES OF THE THREE SERVICE ARMS "UNANIMOUSLY PLEDGED TO SUBORDINATE THEMSELVES TO THE OVERALL SITUATION."

3. COMMENT: DURING HIS APRIL VISIT TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, HU YAOBANG GAVE A SNEAK PREVIEW OF DENG'S ANNOUNCEMENT, BUT HU PREDICTED THAT THE DEMOBILIZATION WOULD BE COMPLETED "THIS YEAR AND NEXT," OR BY THE END OF 1986 (REFTEL). WE SUSPECT THAT IN THE INTERVENING MONTH CHINESE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN

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LEADERS DECIDED THAT AN 18 MONTH FORCE REDUCTION WAS NOT PRACTICAL OR POSSIBLE. PUBLICATION OF THE COMMENT BY SENIOR CADRES OF THE THREE SERVICE ARMS SUPPORTING THE DECISION SEEMS DESIGNED TO REASSURE CONCERNED PLA MEMBERS THAT THEIR LEADERS ACCEPT THE NEED TO SACRIFICE FOR THE GOOD OF THE NATION AND THAT DEMOBILIZATION WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT MILITARY PREPAREDNESS. THE PLANNED REDUCTION IN MILITARY STRENGTH IS YET ANOTHER BREAKTHROUGH IN DENG'S OVERALL PLAN TO PROFESSIONALIZE AND STREAMLINE THE MILITARY. END COMMENT.

HUMMEL

END OF MESSAGE

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